

TOBYHANNA REPORTER

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Vol. 57, No. 1 **TOBYHANNA ARMY DEPOT, TOBYHANNA, PA.** **(WWW.TOBYHANNA.ARMY.MIL)** **JANUARY 21, 2014**

News Notes

New mileage rate takes effect

The General Services Administration announced a new mileage rate for federal employees using private vehicles for government business. The new rate of 56 cents per mile went into effect Jan. 1.

Telework POC changes

The Resource Management Directorate's Manpower and Management Analysis Division will administer the Tobyhanna Army Depot Telework Program. For more information or to submit a telework request, contact Amy Flowers, X59081 or amy.l.flowers8.civ@mail.mil. All current policies and procedures regarding telework remain in effect.

Scholarship forms available

The Scholarships for Military Children Program can help offset the costs of college education with a \$2,000 scholarship.

The deadline to submit an application is Feb. 28.

For more information, call Jerry Durham, X57709, or visit www.militaryscholar.org or www.commissaries.com.

Commissary scans ID cards

Staff members are scanning identification cards at the commissary. The information will be used to verify customer eligibility, determine usage by service and help make improvements.

News broadcast airs bi-weekly

The Tobyhanna Public Affairs Office broadcasts a bi-weekly, Thursday morning news program at 10 a.m. and 2, 6, and 11 p.m.

The broadcast will announce upcoming events, depot visitors and weather conditions similar to the previous morning news program. It will also include information on new workload, manhour execution, project completions and other timely topics.

For more information, call X57308.



Depot overhauls Air Force deployable radar system

Electronics Mechanic Roberto Colon De Jesus overhauls an AN/TPN-19 Landing Control Central (Radar Set) power supply. The AN/TPN-19 is a complete Radar Approach Control (RAPCON) or Ground Control Approach (GCA) facility used by air traffic controllers to identify, sequence and separate participating aircraft; provide final approach guidance, guidance through air defense corridors and zones. Data from the radars is monitored by air traffic controllers working in the operations shelter. To overhaul a system, Tobyhanna employees completely disassemble it, send components to support shops for repair, make any necessary modifications, and test it. Workload often includes diagnosing electrical failures and replacing defective components, testing and repairing all internal wiring and cable harnesses, and blasting, cleaning, priming and complete repainting of the asset. Colon De Jesus works in the Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Directorate's Air Traffic Control Division. (Photo by Steve Grzedzinski)

Stressing safety: Tobyhanna claims governor's award

by Jacqueline Boucher
Editor

Pennsylvania officials named Team Tobyhanna's safety program one of the best in the Commonwealth.

Stressing safety at Tobyhanna Army Depot secured the 2013 Governor's Award for Safety Excellence (GASE). Ten organizations across the state were chosen from 56 competitors to receive the annual award, which will be presented during a ceremony at each location.

"Tobyhanna Army Depot is a great example of an organization that has a strong management-union commitment, to provide all employees a safe workplace while producing quality products for our warfighter," said Bill Keefer, manager of the Report Audit Section

of the Health and Safety Department, Labor and Industry.

Any Pennsylvania employer is eligible for the award; nominations for the award are voluntary. Information and criteria used to determine finalists included workplace injuries/illnesses versus industry standards, and innovation and strategic development of safety policy and approaches. Written nominations and on-site visits are used to determine winners.

The information gained from these nominations provides valuable best practices that are shared across the state, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry website.

"The review committee was very impressed by our presentation, our safety culture and the participation of our employees in

See SAFETY on Page 4

Employee suggestion streamlines daily duties

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Around the Depot spotlights depot personnel, mission

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Guardsmen never miss an opportunity to excel

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APG bids farewell to departing commander

by Robert Dimichele
CECOM Public Affairs

Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. — The Aberdeen Proving Ground community said goodbye to Maj. Gen. (P) Robert S. Ferrell, former commander of the U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command (CECOM).

Ferrell received Senate confirmation of his third star and new assignment to the position of Chief Information Officer/G-6, Office of the Secretary of the Army on Dec. 20. He relinquished command Dec. 23.

As the Chief Information Officer for the Army, Ferrell is now responsible for delivering world-class enterprise services, for enabling network capabilities, and developing information technology policy and architecture to direct information technology activities across the Army. As the G-6, Ferrell represents the operational commanders’ interests in ensuring the network enables a smaller, more capable Army. His promotion ceremony to lieutenant general will be Friday in the Pentagon.


During the farewell event, Ferrell said that “the saddest words I heard were former CECOM commander and former commander of APG.” He thanked everyone for their support and attributed his success to that support. “This promotion to lieutenant general is our promotion. Our unconditional relationship allowed us to achieve great things no matter what the obstacle. This would not have been achieved without you.”

Ferrell concluded by saying “You have a good thing going at APG. You have the magic here. Continue that magic. Take care of one another. This will remain a model for the Army — a national treasure.”

As the command’s acting director, Gary P. Martin now assumes the senior leadership role for CECOM until a new commander is named. Gibson has assumed the role of acting installation commander of Aberdeen Proving Ground.

STAY TUNED

Local media announce weather delays, closures



Television stations	AM radio stations	FM radio stations
WNEP, Channel 16	WARM, 590 (Scranton)	WODE, 99.9 (Allentown)
WYOU, Channel 22	WBAX, 1240 (Wilkes-Barre)	WMGS, 92.9 (Scranton)
WBRE, Channel 28	WEJL (ESPN), 630 (Scranton)	WKRZ, 98.5 (Pittston)
	WILK, 910/980 (Pittston)	WGGY, 101.3 (Pittston)
		WEZX, 106.9 (Scranton)
		WQFM, 92.1 (Nanticoke)

Winter weather often produces hazardous conditions that may impact the depot's operational status. Public announcements regarding depot closings or starting time delays will be provided to local television and radio stations, and recorded on a toll free information hotline. Employees are encouraged to tune in to the media outlets listed below or call 1-800-429-4496 to hear the recorded announcement.



Electronics Worker Cynthia Spencer inspects a pallet of dissipaters for the AN/TPS-59 Marine Corps radar system, ensuring the pallet is correct before going to the Systems Integration and Support Directorate for processing. (Photo by Steve Grzezdziński)

Employees mentor peers, earn accolades

by Justin Eimers
Editorial Assistant

Selfless service and a commitment to continuous improvement are key attributes of two depot employees recently recognized during a quarterly awards ceremony.

Welding Work Leader Robert Miller and Electronics Worker Cynthia Spencer were named the depot’s 2013 Employees of the Quarter for the fourth quarter in the senior and junior category, respectively.

Miller’s ability to work well as part of a team has helped set him apart from his peers.

“He consistently drives his team to exceed production schedules, encourages them to identify inefficiencies and effectively communicates the importance of a quality product across the organization,” said Michael McKeefery, chief of the Manufacturing and Assembly Division, Systems Integration and Support (SIS) Directorate. “He is continually seeking self-improvement opportunities to better himself as an employee, including facilitating an internal Lean event and registering for developmental and college-level courses.”

Miller played a vital role in the design, development and implementation of his cost center’s visual management workload control system, resulting in significant cost savings to welding customers.

“His willingness to take on this challenge required him to build and engage a team that developed standard processes focused on how to save money,” said McKeefery. “His technical expertise and leadership style was the perfect recipe for a successful improvement project that generated more than \$10,000 in savings to our customers in less than 60 days.”

Miller is humbled by the award and honored to be recognized by his coworkers.

“Being named an employee of the quarter was a surprise and is a great honor to receive recognition from my peers and upper management for doing an outstanding job,” said Miller. “I always strive to do the best I can.”

During his time as a temporary supervisor in the SIS Directorate’s Welding Branch, Miller conducted a Lean event and GEMBA walk during which he gained valuable skills he brings to the depot every day.

“My experiences have taught me to listen more closely to what others have to say,” he said. “I have become a better welder and a better mentor to other leaders as well as to my fellow employees. It all has inspired me to pursue a degree in business management so I can continue moving forward in my career.”

Spencer has taken an “outside-the-box” approach to help her peers and complete projects successfully.

“She is one of the original concept developers of the traveler palletization process and goes out of her way to assist every branch in the smooth transition to this program,” said Joseph Lynott, chief of the Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) Directorate’s Range Threat Systems Division. “Her contagious exuberance fosters enthusiasm in others with positive results for change.”

As an electronics worker, Spencer spends time in various ISR cost centers to train personnel and assist in setting up a database for parts processing. This practice ensures items are processed through the SIS shops efficiently and in a timely manner. Her role in the project

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TOBYHANNA REPORTER

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TEAM
TOBYHANNA

EXCELLENCE IN
ELECTRONICS®

No-cost solution to cumbersome problem saves time, cuts expenses

by **Jacqueline Boucher**
Editor

It didn't take long for Peter Ankner to maximize a job's potential by suggesting a better way to meet mission requirements. His idea cost nothing to implement, and cut man hours and expenses in half.

The electronics worker devised a new way to perform software upgrades on thousands of KG-175D encryption devices by simplifying a cumbersome process. As a result, Communications Security (COMSEC) Division employees were also able to maximize work space. The division is part of Communications Systems Directorate.

The new set-up allows for more units to be upgraded at a time, said Frank Curtis, commodity engineer in the Production Engineering Directorate's C4ISR Maintenance Engineering Division. Additionally, units can be fully upgraded without cycling the power on the units. After the change was implemented, the average weekly throughput doubled and reduced cycle time, he said.

Ankner was on the job for little more than a month when he recommended using a 24-port switch to connect the KG-175Ds to the laptop and desktop computers used to load software upgrades. Gone are the days of rotating encryption devices between several laptop computers so that

employees could perform the multi-step process using an 8-port switch. Now, the encryption devices are staged once on the mass modernization rack and the cables are switched once during the upgrade process.

"I knew the new switch would solve the issue and save time and money," said Ankner. "Employees were spending too much time turning each KG-175D on and off, unhooking various cables, and shifting assets around the mass modernization rack and work station to complete the updates."

Swapping a laptop computer for a desktop with dual screens has significantly improved performance, according Ankner. He explained that using the desktop keyboard and larger monitors helps prevent

mistakes and improve work flow.

"During the process, we need to have a window open [on screen] for each device being upgraded, said Ankner. "It's difficult to manage numerous open windows using a small laptop screen. Ergonomically speaking, employees are happy using the new setup, and tracking the progress of each update is easier."

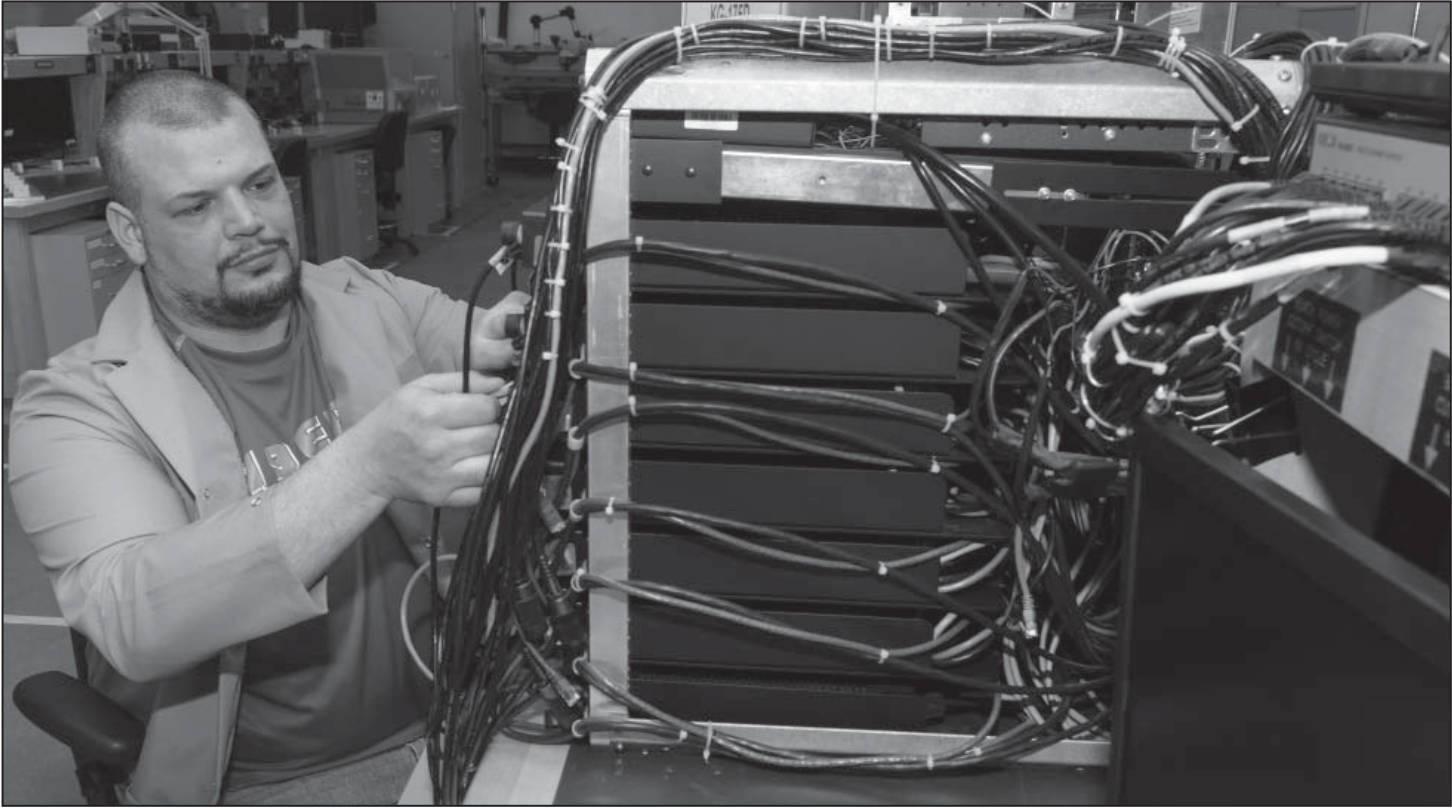
Ankner credits his military service for succeeding in the COMSEC field. Ankner began his depot career in 2007 as a painter. Skills learned while serving in the U.S. Marine Corps and during a 2009 deployment helped him secure a job as an electronics helper and later as an electronics worker.

"I was a radio operator in the Marine Corps," said Ankner. "What is repaired here I've seen or used in the field. It's still hard to believe such a simple idea would gain so much attention."

The suggestion program is an incentive program to encourage civilians to submit ideas that increase the efficiency and productivity of the Army. It also improves morale by providing individuals with the opportunity to voluntarily take part in the improvement of operations and the quality of life within the Army.

Although the Army program was suspended last year to help reduce spending, the suspension does not prohibit the use of local programs. An Army memorandum states that commanders may, at their discretion and in accordance with appropriate fiscal guidance, assess ideas the work force presents and adopt those that will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Army operations within their purview.

Local guidance is available in the depot's Suggestion Program Office. Step-by-step instructions are also available on Tobyhanna's intranet page. Click on the Programs-Services link then the Army Suggestion Program link.



Peter Ankner, electronics worker, found a way to perform software upgrades on thousands of KG-175D encryption devices by simplifying a cumbersome process. As a result, Communications Systems Directorate's Communications Security Division employees were also able maximize work space. (Photo by Steve Grzedzinski)

Electronics program recognizes hard work; offers incentive for employee development

Tobyhanna Army Depot Electronics Certificate Program offers opportunities to earn certificates in basic electronics (original certificate), intermediate electronics, and communications and radar.

A few program changes were implemented earlier this month. For instance, the IPC J-Standard-001 certification is no longer a requirement to obtain the Basic Electronics Certificate. Instead, employees must complete the following courses: direct current theory, alternating current theory, diodes, transistors and one elective.

Classes have also been added to the list of electives — System Troubleshooting, Radar II and IPC J-Standard-001 certification.

Since June 2012, 64 employees have earned the Basic Electronics Certificate.

The Electronics Certificate Program sets the foundation to enhance knowledge and skills, provides incentive for career development, and develops a three to five year training plan.

The program provides a pool of well-rounded employees allowing a more flexible, trained and qualified work force to increase efficiencies and quality products.

Electronics certificates can be achieved by successful completion of the following courses:

- Basic Electronics Certificate: Direct current theory,

- alternating current theory, diodes, transistors and one elective.
- Intermediate Electronics Certificate: Digital I, II and IC, and microprocessors, amplifiers/oscillators, operational amplifiers and one elective.
- Communications Certificate: Receivers/transmitters, microwave fundamentals, introduction to antennas and phased array, modern digital communications, and one elective.
- Radar Certificate: Receivers/transmitters, microwave fundamentals, introduction to antennas and phased array, introduction to radar, electronic warfare principles, and one elective.
- Available Electives: Test equipment; schematic interpretation; laboratory virtual instrumentation engineering workbench (LabVIEW); introduction to robotics; IPC-7711/7721 rework, modification and repair of electronic assemblies; IPC-A-610 acceptability of electronics assemblies, and IPC/WHMA-A-620 requirements and acceptance for cable and wire harness assemblies.

Information is available on the intranet, under Training Links, TYAD Electronics Certificate Program.

Employees who meet the program requirements should complete ELTY Form 6364 and send it to Technical Development Division, Brenda Fiorani, brenda.fiorani.civ@mail.mil.

<u>BASIC ELECTRONICS CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT</u>	
Adam Plesnarski	
Systems Integration and Support (SIS) Directorate	
Franklin Shinn	
Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) Directorate	
<u>INTERMEDIATE ELECTRONICS CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT</u>	
Adam Plesnarski	
SIS Directorate	
Shaun Young	
ISR Directorate	
<u>COMMUNICATIONS CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT</u>	
Adam Plesnarski	
SIS Directorate	
<u>RADAR CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT</u>	
Adam Plesnarski	
SIS Directorate	

SAFETY from Page 1

safety program,” said Russel Dunkelberger, Industrial Risk Management Directorate’s Safety Division chief. “This is a testament to the dedication of the entire team, and reinforces what we already knew - that Tobyhanna has a world-class safety program based on the hard work and commitment of the entire work force.”

The depot’s robust and extensive safety program outlines personnel responsibilities and provides implementation instructions, goals and methods to monitor its success.

Tobyhanna is certified as a U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) Star site and under the Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series (OHSAS) 18001, which governs management systems.

Tobyhanna’s commitment to safety is evident in the many working groups that track and reinforce the dedication and commitment of the commander to the safety of all employees on the depot. For instance, dozens of people participate in the Risk Management Committee, Mission Safety Council and Safety Star Point Program

These meetings and others provide an open forum to discuss safety issues or concerns. Active participation in the depot’s comprehensive programs provides a continuous exchange of information between leadership, employees, tenant organizations, various contractor activities and union officials.

“What establishes Tobyhanna’s safety program as elite, and sets it apart from the others, is our proactive approach,” Dunkelberger explained. “The Safety Hazard Reporting Program, for example, allows employees to report potentially unsafe conditions so that they can be corrected in a timely manner, preventing injuries from occurring. The Red Card Program reminds employees of their empowerment and responsibility to stop

and correct unsafe acts and conditions. Employees routinely incorporate safety into their everyday routine and are happy to share their observations and ideas with others.”

Tobyhanna maintains an injury/illness rate that is 70 percent below the North American Industrial Classification System Rate in the Repair and Maintenance Category 811. Dunkelberger remarked that this consistently low rate, combined with a continuing application of Lean principles and tools, makes Tobyhanna a “world-class, safety-first organization.”

Safety awareness is incorporated into all aspects of the depot’s business. Increased emphasis on wellness programs has increased employee participation and knowledge of health and safety. More employees are taking advantage of activities and services such as the “Get Up and Move” campaign, weekly lunchtime wellness classes, health screenings, ergonomics and worker conditioning programs.

“The workers who participate in the worker conditioning program have shown remarkable strides in improving their overall health,” said Marti Verbonitz, acting director of the Industrial Risk Management Directorate, referencing recent survey reviews. “Many employees participating regularly over an average of 12 weeks have shown significant weight loss, lower blood pressure and better dexterity.”

Tobyhanna’s designation as a VPP site represents excellence in Occupational Safety and Health. For seven years, Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series (OHSAS) audits have repeatedly identified best practices. And safety award programs help motivate team members toward excellence in safety on a continuous basis.

“Safety at Tobyhanna is not just a management system or a single objective,” said Verbonitz. “It is a way of life that addresses safety at work, home and in the community.”



Joe Brungard, an electronics mechanic in the Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Directorate’s Counter Fire Division, attaches an antenna safety collar to an AN/TPQ-37 Firefinder radar. The device is used to lock the antenna in an upright position while technicians overhaul the Antenna Receiver Group. (Photo by Steve Grzedzinski)



PEO works to expand depot support

Mechanical Engineer Brian Thomas shows Brig. Gen. Daniel Hughes a tie down component from the support pallet of an AN/TYQ-23 Tactical Air Operations Module. Hughes is the product executive officer for Command, Control and Communications-Tactical (PEO C3T). The TYQ-23 is a mobile command, control and communications facility providing the ability to plan, direct and execute airspace management activities. The tie down component Hughes is holding is a design that failed during testing at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. Thomas, who works in the Production Engineering Directorate’s Engineer Design and Development Division, was tasked with designing a more robust tie down that would survive testing. Thomas used this example to explain Tobyhanna Army Depot’s engineering process to Hughes. PEO C3T, headquartered at Aberdeen Proving Grounds (APG), is one of Tobyhanna’s largest customers. Depot commander Col. Gerhard P. R. Schröter noted that PEO C3T has several future workload opportunities in tactical radios, tactical satellites, COMSEC, WIN-T, NETT Warrior, and mission command platforms. Schröter said that Hughes was impressed by depot facilities, capabilities and performance. As a result, Hughes will bring his project managers back in late spring to work on expanding the support Tobyhanna provides to C3T. (Photo by Steve Grzedzinski)

EXCELLENCE IN ELECTRONICS

AROUND THE DEPOT



Joseph Rychwalski, electronics mechanic, performs an operations check on a Duke remote control unit.



Above, Raymond Silveri, electronics mechanic, inspects a Duke system. The Duke is a counter improvised explosive device (IED) system which jams frequencies to neutralize the threat of IEDs. Right, Michael Pavinich, electronics mechanic, performs an operational check on a THOR III system. The THOR uses three transceivers mounted on backpacks to jam radio-controlled IEDs



Marie Flint, materiel handler, takes inventory of a pallet of Duke secondary units as they arrive in the shop for processing.



Matthew Herlihy, electronics mechanic, reassembles a Duke secondary unit after performing a mechanical inspection.



Jason Hamilton, electronics mechanic, reassembles a Duke primary unit as part of the workload being accomplished in the branch.

Electronic War Systems Branch

Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Directorate

Personnel assigned to the branch work an array of precision jammers used by warfighters to combat the threat of radio controlled improvised explosive devices, which are a common threat to lives in deployed locations. Employees work on electronic warfare systems such as the Duke primary and secondary units, THOR III, CREW Vehicle Radio Jammer and the Guardrail Common Sensor.

Photos by Steve Grzezdinski

CAREER MILESTONE



From left, Daniel Pule, Frank Simko, depot commander Col. Gerhard P.R. Schröter, Cletus Campbell, Robert Petrone and Mary Grace Washo attend the Length of Service ceremony held Dec. 18.

Five Tobyhanna Army Depot employees were recognized for their years of government service during the Length of Service ceremony on Dec. 18.

Mary Grace Washo — 40 years, government information specialist, Customer Support Division, Information Management Directorate.

Robert Petrone — 35 years, engineering technician, Engineering Design, Development and Manufacturing Division, Production Engineering Directorate.

Frank Simko — 30 years, housing manager, Equipment and Supply Division, Public Works Directorate.

Daniel Pule — 30 years, electronic

integrated systems mechanic, Range Threat Systems Division, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Directorate.

Cletus Campbell — 30 years, quality assurance specialist, Quality Management Division, Productivity Improvement and Innovation Directorate.

In addition to service certificates and pins, employees with 40 years receive a gold watch and an engraved crystal eagle statue. Individuals who serve 35 years receive an engraved mantel clock and 30 years receive a framed American flag that includes a photo of the depot signed by their coworkers.

Depot commander Col. Gerhard P.R. Schröter presented the awards.

DEPOT COUNSEL

Mark Blasko is the depot’s chief attorney.

As the depot counsel, he exercises professional legal authority on all legal matters, particularly in the areas of environmental law, acquisition law, labor and employment law, and ethics. He supervises a staff of three attorneys, a paralegal/claims officer and a legal technician.

Prior to his current position, Blasko was an attorney/advisor within the legal office. He began his depot career in December 2004 and serves as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve.

Blasko served six years on active duty in the Army as a trial counsel with the 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry, Fort Lewis, Wash.; environmental law specialist, Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y.; and command judge advocate, Tobyhanna Army Depot. He deployed to Kabul, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom serving as administrative law attorney.

His decorations include the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster (OLC), Commendation Medal with four OLCs, Joint Service



Blasko

Achievement Medal with one OLC, Achievement Medal with one OLC, National Defense Service Medal with one OLC, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Service Ribbon, Armed Forces Medal with “M” device, NATO Medal, Parachutist Badge and the Gold German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge.

Blasko is a 1986 graduate of MMI Preparatory School. He received a bachelor’s degree in political science from Bloomsburg University in 1991, a degree from the Widener University School of Law, Wilmington, Del., in 1998 and a master’s degree in Business Administration from Touro University International, Cyprus, Calif., in 2007.

He is a member of the American Legion Post 473, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1043, serves on the Board of Directors of the Freeland Northside Community Ambulance Association, and is a merit badge counselor for Boy Scout Troop 473. His hobbies include running, hunting, hiking, kayaking and farming.

RETIREEES		
Name	Retirement date	Organization
Jane Allardyce	Jan. 1	Contracting
Edward Hendela	Jan. 3	DCMA
Mary Smith	Jan. 4	LOGSA
Neil Andres	Jan. 11	LOGSA

Read the **TOBYHANNA REPORTER** on the depot’s Internet site.

Current and archived issues of the monthly publication can be viewed at

[HTTP://WWW.TOBYHANNA.ARMY.MIL/ABOUT/NEWS/REPORTER.HTML](http://www.tobyhanna.army.mil/about/news/reporter.html)

Soldier’s work ethic nets Warfighter of the Quarter Award

by **Jacqueline Boucher**
Editor

Swift and decisive actions during peacetime and war were paramount to an Army Guardsman earning Tobyhanna Army Depot’s Warfighter of the Quarter Award. The award recognizes military personnel for outstanding service.

Staff Sgt. Matthew Lipo, an intelligence analyst for the 55th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 28th Infantry Division, was presented the fiscal 2014 first quarter award by depot commander Col. Gerhard P.R. Schröter. His unit is headquartered in Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

The presentation took place during a ceremony at a Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins hockey game Dec. 14. Also participating in the event was Lipo’s commanding officer, Capt. Edward Wallace. Lipo is the 17th recipient of the award. He has served in the Army for 15 years.

“Lipo embodies the core values of a noncommissioned officer (NCO),” Wallace said. “His leadership style and aptitude to perform as a leader is highly regarded by the leadership of his battalion.”

According to coworkers, Lipo never passes on an opportunity to excel. “His perseverance and tenacious attitude make arduous missions possible and he can always be counted on for success,” Wallace said.



Staff Sgt. Matthew Lipo, right, and Sgt. Michael Merryman, electronic warfare sergeant, perform weapons maintenance during a monthly drill weekend. (U.S. Army photo)

He’s volunteered to deploy to Southwest Asia several times.

The seasoned veteran participated in the battalion’s first combat deployment since World War II (also the first Pennsylvania Army National Guard unit to mobilize) to Iraq in December 2003. The NCO later demonstrated a warrior ethos under extreme duress in November 2004, while traveling

north of Baghdad, Iraq.

“He suppressed enemy rocket and small arms fire during an insurgent attack [in 2004],” Wallace said. “His actions contributed to the enemy’s inability to maintain lethal contact with the Soldiers.” Senior leaders described Lipo’s actions as “well-disciplined and courageous in the heat of battle.”

“I just try to obey orders, and anticipate the needs of my superiors and subordinates,” he said, shrugging off the praise for what he considers just doing his job. “The most important thing I’ve learned during my career is how to keep everything in perspective.”

In 2011 Lipo was selected by the battalion commander to help prepare the unit for mobilization to Operation Enduring Freedom. During the deployment Lipo held a number of jobs. Early on, he ensured fielded equipment was issued to deploying Soldiers and later provided vital information to command staff while acting as battalion senior intelligence NCO. In addition, Lipo served as squad leader.

“His leadership skills and knowledge sharply stood out during the pre-mobilization training,” Wallace said. “It’s common knowledge that Lipo always performs at a high level.”

Lipo’s military service began in 1987 when he joined the Army National Guard. He transferred to active duty from 1994-1995. Following a seven-year break in service, Lipo returned to the Guard.

“I’m honored and humbled that people thought enough of my work to put me in for this award,” Lipo said. “I’ve learned that true success in the military can only come by thinking of others first.”

Budget bill to fund government through September

by **Jim Garamone**
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON—A Pentagon spokesman has praised a budget bill that won final Congressional approval Jan. 16, which would fund the government through September, but cautions tough spending decisions remain.

The bill provides DOD with necessary funding for critical investments and modernization, an increase in pay and benefits, continued training, equipment maintenance and funding that supports military operations in Afghanistan, said Navy Rear Adm. John Kirby, the Pentagon press secretary.

It alleviates some of the cuts mandated under sequestration. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel has worked long and hard with



Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel

members of Congress on the legislation. “Preserving our readiness has been his number one priority,” Kirby said.

The wide ranging spending bill doesn’t solve every problem, but it does provide DOD a measure of stability.

One aspect revises a provision covering medically retired service members. “Last week, Secretary Hagel visited Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas, to visit with our wounded warriors,” Kirby said. “There he met Victor Rivera, a medically retired Army sergeant wounded in Iraq in 2007 who continues to receive rehabilitation care there at the Center for the Intrepid.”

The sergeant would have been subject to the so called cost-of-living minus one percent provision within the bipartisan budget act. “The secretary is pleased that the bipartisan spending package includes a fix that will exempt medically retired personnel like Sergeant Rivera from a slower rate of growth of pension payments during their working years,” the admiral said.

Hagel is looking forward to working with Congress on a comprehensive approach to pay in benefits that addresses growing imbalances in the U.S. military.

Still, tough choices lie ahead. DOD faces decisions about the future of the force. “We are still absorbing nearly \$30 billion over the next 10 years that were not accounted for in the presidential budget submission,” Kirby said.

The measure also provides funding for fiscal 2015 above sequestration levels, even though it will still be \$40 billion less than projected last year. “Without further compromise, sequestration will remain the law of the land for the next decade,” he said.

The secretary briefed the combatant commanders, service chiefs, service secretaries and other senior leaders of the department to continue discussions on the fiscal 2015 budget submission.

The meeting also included a healthy discussion of the quadrennial defense review that’s currently underway, Kirby said.

“With this leadership council behind them, Secretary Hagel and the service secretaries will now turn to finalizing the DOD budget plan for fiscal year ’15,” the admiral said.

Officials do not know when the budget submission will happen. The Office of Management and Budget makes that determination which traditionally has been the first Monday in February.



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Assistant fire chief to join national rescue team

by Anthony Ricchiazzi
Public Affairs Specialist

The assistant fire department chief has been selected to join a national search and rescue program.

Daryl Gebhardt, recently promoted to assistant fire chief [see sidebar], has been selected to become a member of Pennsylvania Task Force One, one of the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s 28 national urban search and rescue teams spread throughout the continental United States. The agency is part of the Department of Homeland Security.

“It is contingent on completing the training, which I anticipate will be done in about six months,” he said.

He is the third employee at Tobyhanna Army Depot to earn an invitation to join the Task Force.

Jeff Finlay, chief of Security and Emergency Management for the Defense Logistics Agency, a tenant organization here, was selected at the same time for the position of planning team manager with the task force.

The planning team manager is responsible for planning aspects of the Task Force during incident operations.

Fire Chief A.J. Gilgallon has been on the team for 24 years, first as a search and rescue specialist and now as a safety officer.

Members are certified to participate in search and rescue missions anywhere in the United States.

They are comprised of more than 210 personnel from numerous participating agencies, and have been deployed in a number of major disaster response efforts, including hurricanes Floyd and Katrina, and at the World Trade Center after the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attack.

According to FEMA’s Web site, teams are comprised of firefighters, engineers, medical professionals, canine/handler teams and emergency managers with special training in urban search-and-rescue environments who serve as



DARYL GEBHARDT is assistant fire chief of the Industrial Risk Management’s Fire Department. The department is part of the Emergency Services Division

As assistant chief, his primary responsibilities include operations, training and assisting in the overall planning, development and operation of the Fire and Emergency Services Division. Gebhardt supervises and directs the work of about 15 firefighters/emergency medical technicians. He assumes the duties of the fire chief in his absence, and directs and controls division personnel during emergencies that include fire suppression, hazardous material response and medical emergencies.

Gebhardt also responds to and assumes the Incident Command role at a variety of emergencies and, as needed, serves as a member of the crisis management team. He began his depot career in October 2009.

He graduate from North Pocono High School in 2001 and earned a bachelor’s degree in Fire Science Administration from Columbia Southern University, Ala., in 2012. He also earned an Advanced Safety Certificate in October 2013 from the National Safety Council, Ill., and is pursuing a master’s degree in Occupational Safety and Health.

Gebhardt is assistant fire chief of the Gouldsboro Volunteer Fire Company and a member of the East Central Pennsylvania Regional Task Force All Hazards Incident Management Team. He is also an instructor and certification evaluator with the Bucks County Community College Public Safety Training Center

He enjoys fishing and camping.

a national resource for disaster response.

Urban search-and-rescue involves the location, rescue (extrication), and initial medical stabilization of victims trapped in confined spaces. Structural collapse is most often the cause of victims being trapped, but victims may also be trapped in transportation accidents, mines and collapsed trenches.

Gebhardt noted that a task force is totally self sufficient for the first 72 hours of a deployment, so team members have to be in good physical condition.

He became aware of the task force after 9/11, saw their capabilities and made it a career goal to be a member.

“Since then I’ve taken several classes to meet the minimum entry requirements, which are in addition to my

training as a firefighter” he said.

He applied to join in August 2013 and was selected for safety officer. The safety officer reviews and must support any action plan for a search and rescue operation to ensure the health and safety of all Task Force team members.

Gebhardt said the task force is highly selective in accepting team members and the training is more rigorous than then the usual training for a firefighter.

“It’s taken eight years to get to this point of applying for the position,” he said. “To be on this team, you have to be at the highest level of training for deployments. The people on these teams are the highest caliber, very knowledgeable and experienced.”

The task force is a partnership between state fire departments, law enforcement agencies, federal and local governmental agencies and private companies.



DID YOU KNOW THAT

Army Emergency Relief (AER) was incorporated as a private non-profit organization on Feb. 5, 1942?

The initial purpose of AER was to collect and hold funds to relieve distress of members of the U.S. Army and their dependents. This remains true today.

AER assumed the Army Relief Society (ARS) mission of providing financial assistance to widows/widowers and orphans of deceased Regular Army personnel upon the merger of ARS with AER on July 2,1976.

Contact the Tobyhanna Army Depot
Army Emergency Relief Office at 570-615-6682.

Soldiers Helping Soldiers for 72 Years
www.aerhq.org

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and the recognition as an employee of the quarter bring Spencer feelings of pride and honor.

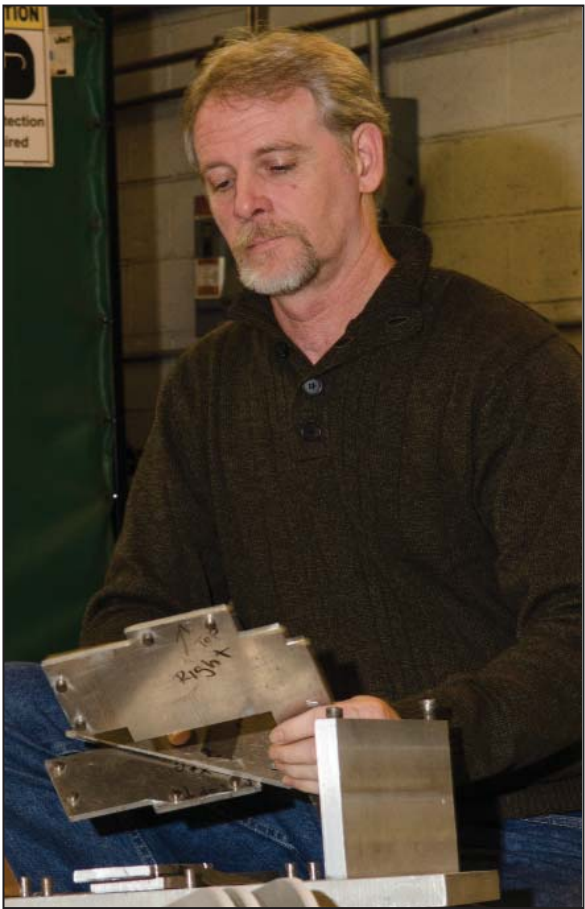
“I take pride in all of my work and this recognition means that my work ethic has not gone unnoticed,” said Spencer. “It is such an honor to receive an award with as much visibility as the Employee of the Quarter.”

Lynott praised her innovative solutions and positive dedication to completing her tasks.

“Her involvement in promoting the palletization process at all levels has reduced the amount of misidentified items and has been a successful change. Her leadership is displayed through her volunteer efforts during lunch and breaks to prepare and train employees of other cost centers,” said Lynott.

Spencer’s experiences and various duties have given her the knowledge and advice she can share with other personnel across the depot.

“Working with many different people from several departments to achieve a common goal is very gratifying, especially when there is a positive outcome,” she said. “Sometimes you will encounter disagreements so you must be adaptable and able to think and work outside your comfort zone. Always be open-minded.”



Above, Welding Work Leader Robert Miller checks a part against the print provided to ensure it is correct prior to issuing to a welder. (Photo by Steve Grzezzdzinski)